

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2027
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.12.2017

Deforestation in NE Region

2027. SHRI BAITE THANGSO:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the rapid deforestation in the North Eastern Region particularly in the State of Manipur;
- (b) if so, the remedial action taken and guidelines issued to the State Government to curb the situation;
- (c) whether there is any alternative plan/method to replace large scale Jhum cultivation in the hill areas; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)**

- (a) As per the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2015 of Forest Survey of India, Dehradun, although there has been an overall decrease in forest cover due to various reasons to the extent of 628 sq km in the North Eastern Region as per the 2015 assessment in comparison to its 2013 assessment. There has been an increase in forest cover in the State of Manipur to the extent of four sq km during the same period.
- (b) The primary responsibility of protection and management of forest areas from various threats lies with the respective State/Union Territory Governments. To increase the forest cover in the country, afforestation programmes are taken up by Government of India under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as National Afforestation Programme (NAP), Green India Mission (GIM), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) which from 2015-16 has been amalgamated as the Watershed Development Component of the “Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)” and under Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA). Further, financial assistance is also provided for various forest protection measures under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes of this Ministry such as Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitat (IDWH), Project

Tiger, Project Elephant and erstwhile Intensification of Forest Management Scheme (IFMS) which was revised and replaced as Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme (FPM).

- (c) & (d) Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), which is an autonomous organization under Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare has developed location specific alternative models on improved farming practices such as Soil and Water Conservation Program, Agro-forestry and Integrated Farming System for "Jhum Improvement". In this method, major emphasis is given on improving the productivity of jhum crops and conserving the natural resources to increase the jhum cycle. The basic features of improved Jhum farming model includes introduction of improved crop varieties (like fruit and plantation crop trees) with good yield potential in jhum land, introduction of pulses in jhum field for improving soil fertility, introduction of location specific multipurpose tree such as Tree bean (*Parkia roxburghii*), Bamboo, Teak etc. and bio-fencing of jhum field with perennial crops (Fruit and forest plants) and perennial fodder grasses in Jhum farming model, maintenance of higher level of soil organic matter in jhum fields through efficient management of crop residues and other biomass, application of biofertilizers for managing soil nutrients in jhum fields, construction micro-rain water harvesting structure (Jalkund, Farm Pond etc.) depending on availability of suitable space in sloping land in jhum area or harvesting perennial spring water through diversion channel for ensuring life-saving irrigation, adoption of contour trenches, contour bunds, vegetative bunds etc. for minimizing the soil loss and linking jhum crops with secondary agriculture like value addition, bee keeping, mushroom production etc. involving farm women. Further, State Forest Departments of respective States take up various measures for soil moisture conservation, catchment area treatment, jhumia rehabilitation, development and implementation of suitable agro-forestry models, awareness programmes, suitable alternative livelihood programmes etc. Government of Mizoram has launched a flagship programme called New Land Use Policy (NLUP) since 2010 in which Jhumia families are encouraged to take up alternative livelihoods which include petty traders & small time manufacturing and so far, over 1.30 lakh families have been covered under the NLUP.
